

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR WASHINGTON

MAY 2 7 2010

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On April 30, 2010, you asked me to prepare a report evaluating additional offshore oil and gas safety measures that the Department of the Interior might impose, even as on-going investigations work to identify the root causes of the BP Oil Spill disaster. You asked that I provide this report on an expedited basis so the American people can be assured that offshore oil and gas development activities can be conducted safely and that another event like the BP Oil Spill never occurs again.

In developing the recommendations included in this report, my Department consulted with a wide range of experts from industry, government, and academia. In addition, draft recommendations were reviewed by seven experts identified by the National Academies of Engineering. Although I am certain that on-going investigations of the disaster including, in particular the work of the Presidential Commission that you announced last week, will help inform, refine, and supplement these recommendations, I believe that the report provides a sound basis for making initial decisions regarding offshore oil and gas activities.

The report recommends a number of specific measures that can be taken on both a short and longer term basis to enhance the safety of offshore oil and gas activities. It notes that drilling activities conducted in the deepwater environment create increased risks and challenges. In that regard, the report focuses on two key aspects of drilling safety: (1) well design and construction and well control procedures, and (2) the blowout preventer equipment and backup control systems.

In addition to approving the important recommendations in this report, I also recommend that you impose a moratorium on all oil and gas drilling activity from floating rigs for 6 months. A moratorium would enable the Department to develop additional details regarding several of the recommendations, while also providing the Presidential Commission with an opportunity to comment upon, and potentially adjust, the recommendations as part of its comprehensive review.

I look forward to receiving your instructions in this important matter.

Respectfully,

Con Silgar

Ken Salazar